



[Agostinho Neto, 1922-1979](#)

Agostinho Neto

Agostinho Neto, the first President of MPLA, and the first President of the independent republic of Angola, was a great writer - a poet - as well as a great revolutionary leader.

The **attached** document, also linked below, is as good an example as could be found of how, through radio, speech, and eventually through the translation and compilation of the same into a pamphlet by the solidarity movement, the kinds of words which held the liberation movement together, and also publicised it, were made and multiplied.

Now, in 2015, it may be thought that the propagation of such words was easy in those days, or automatic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The liberation movements were outsiders. Their supporters in other countries, whom Neto here mentions and acknowledges, were few, and were not in the “mainstream”. The countries which now parade as “the international community”, as “NATO”, the “ICC”, and in other

guises - in other words the governments of the metropolitan Imperialist countries - in those days were solidly and openly supporting colonialism. Portugal, for example, was then (and has never since ceased to be) a conspicuous member of NATO, which is actually the armed wing of Imperialism.

In these particular writings Agostinho Neto does not, as the writings of Mondlane and Cabral that we have quoted did, reflect explicitly on the place of intellectual work in the national democratic revolution.

Instead, this set of three items, presented together as a pamphlet, directly exemplifies such intellectual work in practice.

It is hard not to be moved by these words even after the passage of more than 40 years. They still have the immediacy and the urgency that they had when they were spoken by Agostinho Neto and when they were heard by the three different audiences to which they were addressed.

These words carry truths and lessons that still need to be learned, and re-learned.

In a different mood, some of Agostinho Neto's poems, translated into English, can be read if you [click here](#).

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Agostinho Neto, Messages to Companions in the Struggle, 1972](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).